

(Through the Bible) Genesis 24-26

by Chuck Smith

The sermon highlights the importance of stepping out in faith and trusting God's leading, as illustrated by the servant's journey to find a bride for Isaac.

Duration: 1:21:53

Scripture: Genesis 24:7-67, Matthew 6:33, 1 Corinthians 13:12

Topics: "Expositional"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the story of Isaac and Rebecca from the Bible. The servant of Isaac's father is sent to find a wife for Isaac and he prays to God for guidance. When he arrives at the well, he meets Rebecca and her brother Laban. Laban invites the servant and his camels to stay the night. The servant then tells Laban about his mission and how God has blessed Isaac with wealth. Laban agrees to let Rebecca go with the servant to marry Isaac.

Transcript

Genesis chapter 24, and Abraham was old and well stricken in age and the Lord had blessed Abraham in all things. Abraham said unto his eldest servant of his house that ruled over all that he had, put I pray thee thy hand under my thigh. So, Abraham is now seeking to extract a promise from the servant and he wants it to be a very strong covenant that he makes with the servant.

Now, earlier the chief servant of Abraham was named Eliezer. Whether or not Eliezer was still alive is not known at this time because he had been Abraham's servant for a long time and it is possible that by this point in history Eliezer had already died. But if indeed it is still Eliezer, it makes the story that much more interesting because Eliezer means God my help.

And in as much as we look at this story of Eliezer going into the far country to get a bride for Abraham's son, in this particular story there is a beautiful spiritual application. For already we have seen Abraham as a type of the father. We have seen Isaac as the type of the son Jesus Christ.

And Eliezer would become the type of the Holy Spirit. And thus his name would become significant, Eliezer God my help. For when Jesus promised the Holy Spirit in the 14th chapter of John, he said and I will pray the father and he will give you another comforter.

The Greek word is paracletus, which means one to come alongside to help. So here we have the name Eliezer God my helper and the Holy Spirit being called the comforter or one who comes alongside to help. And if you'll keep now in mind the spiritual application as we are reading through the story, it will become very significant to you and no doubt the Holy Spirit will flash on you certain bits of inspiration as suddenly you see the real picture of the father sending the Holy Spirit into a far country or outside then of the Jewish realm to get a bride for Jesus Christ and the work of the Holy Spirit in convincing the bride that she should go.

And so if you'll keep that in mind as we go through the 24th chapter here, you will get what I believe to be the picture that God wants to receive from this particular story in the scriptures. So Abraham caused his servant to swear unto him that he would not take a bride for his son from the nations where they were living, but that he would go back unto Abraham's home and he would draw or he would get there a bride for his son. So as we go on, and I will make thee swear by the Lord the God of heaven and the God of the earth that thou shalt not take a wife of my son from the daughters of the Canaanites among whom I dwell, but thou shalt go unto my country and to my kindred and take a wife unto my son Isaac.

And the servant said unto him, peradventure the woman will not be willing to follow me unto this land. Must I needs bring thy son again unto the land from whence you came. And Abraham said unto him, beware that you do not bring my son there again.

The Lord God of heaven which took me from my father's house and from the land of my family and which spake unto me that and that swear unto me saying unto thy seed will I give this land, he shall send his angel before thee and thou shalt take a wife unto my son from there. And if the woman will not be willing to follow thee, then thou shalt be clear from this my oath, only bring not my son there again. So the servant put his hand under the thigh of Abraham, his master, and swear to him concerning that matter.

And so the servant wanted to be clear in the instructions. It was his duty now. He was being charged with the duty of getting a bride for Isaac, Abraham's son.

And he wants to make sure that he has things straight and clear and an understanding. If I go there and I find a young girl, but she's not willing to come to this land, then that is really asking a young girl to take a chance. Because you've never seen the fellow and he's some 500 miles away.

And the chance of your returning home again are very slim. So she's being asked to take really a venture in faith herself. That she's going to love him.

That she's going to be happy there. That he's going to be all that she wants him to be. And the chances of a young girl buying such a thing as that is remote.

And the servant understanding that really probably questioned in his heart if he could talk a young girl even into coming back with him. He surely foresaw the difficulties of such a thing. But Abraham, who believed God, had confidence that such would be the case, that the young girl would come back.

And thus he said, the angel of the Lord will go before you and he'll set things up. But the big command was, don't take Isaac there. This is the land that God has promised.

Abraham is certain about that. And Isaac is not to go back to the land of Haran. And if the girl doesn't come, then the servant is freed from this vow that he took.

And the vow became a sacred kind of a charge or a trust. It was something that he was obligated to fulfill to his very best ability. And so he is determining, before he promises, he wants to know completely what he's promising.

He wants to get the terms of the vow clear. And so Abraham clarifies the issue concerning the girl. And thus he takes the vow that he will go and seek to persuade a young girl to come and be Isaac's bride.

And the servant took 10 camels of the camels of his master and he departed for all the goods of his master were in his hand. And he arose and he went to Mesopotamia under the city of Nahar. And he made his camels to kneel down without the city by a well of water at the time of the evening, about that time when the women usually went out to draw water.

And then he prayed and he said, O Jehovah God of my master Abraham, I pray thee send me good speed this day and show kindness unto my master Abraham. Behold, I stand here by the well of water and the daughters of the men of the city come out to draw water. Now let it come to pass that the damsel to whom I shall say, let down thy pitcher, I pray thee that I may drink.

And she shall say, drink and I will give thy camels drink also. Let the same one be the one that you have appointed for thy servant Isaac. And thereby shall I know that you have showed kindness unto my master.

So the servant of Abraham is sort of setting up a fleece with God in a manner of speaking. He's setting up now a certain little thing. Lord, I don't know where she is.

Now you've got one picked out here someplace. And so in as much as I don't know the one that you've got picked out, let's make a deal. When the girls come out here to draw water, I'll go up to them and I'll say, give me a drink.

Now, if one will give me a drink and if she will respond to me and say, oh, I'll get water for your camels also. Lord, let that be the one that you have chosen. Let that be the sign.

I'll know when she says that, that that's the one you've chosen. And so he's sort of setting now conditions whereby he might know God's choice in this matter. Now it is interesting.

Sometimes it seems that it takes a long time for our prayers to be answered. Abraham had been praying for his son for years before the answer came. Sometimes our prayers are answered almost immediately.

Just as quickly as we can ask them many times, the answer seems to be there. Now, why is it that sometimes prayers get immediate response and then other times it seems that God isn't even hearing us and it takes such a long time before our prayers are answered? Well, to me, it just shows that God is in control of things. You see, if I were in control of things, I would answer all my prayers immediately.

But the fact that God waits in some issues only shows me that I don't have the capacity to do it. It's in God's hands and that he is in control of the issues of my life and the timing of those issues. And I have discovered that it's best for me that God is in control.

Because there were many things that I asked for that later on I said, Lord, cancel that request back there on June the 24th. If it's all right, Lord, just forget that one and don't answer it. Because as I get down the road, I see that I don't need it.

Or I see that it wouldn't be beneficial. I see where it could actually be harmful. And so I have put in the cancel request on many of the earlier orders.

God is in control. It's best that God remains in control or else we've got chaos on our hands. I believe that every right thing that you have ever prayed for, God intended to give it to you before you ever prayed.

And I believe that your prayer just opened up the opportunity for God to give it to you. That he was intending to give it to you all the way along. That he being a wise and loving father knew years ago what you were going to be needing yesterday.

And those prayers that he answered for you yesterday, he had intended to answer those all the way along. I believe that your father knows what you have need of before you ever ask him. And every right thing you've ever asked him for, he has already intended to do for you.

For I do not believe that prayer changes the will of God. That is not my concept of God at all. That I can get down and I can really argue with him and give to him reasons and logic and so forth.

And I can change the mind of God by my persuasive powers in prayer. I don't believe that. I believe that every good thing that I've asked God to give to me, he already intended to give to me.

That is before I ever asked him. John said, if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. And if he hears us, then we have received the petitions that we have asked of him.

You say, oh, but there are some beautiful promises. If you ask anything in my name, that will I do that the Father may be glorified in the Son. Henceforth, you've asked nothing in my name.

Ask that you might receive, that your joy might be full. And whatsoever things you desire when you pray, believe that you receive them and ye shall have them. Whatsoever things, anything, whatsoever things, pretty wide open, isn't it? But let me ask you, who was Jesus talking to when he said that? Was he talking to the multitudes? Go back and look.

The multitudes weren't around at all when he said that. Jesus was talking at that time to a close-knit little group that were called his disciples. But what did it take to be his disciple? He said, if any man will come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross and follow me.

So stamp that over all of those whatsoever things and all things in all. Stamp that over the top. Because he's only talking to those persons who have already denied themselves and have taken up their cross and are following him.

They've already come to the cross in their own life. They're not looking for their own glory or for their own welfare or for their own benefit. They're looking now only to glorify Jesus Christ.

They've made that total kind of a commitment of themselves and their lives to him. And for that person, whatsoever things you desire, because the only things you're going to desire are those things that are pleasing to God and those things that God is wanting to do. So you can't just take these all things and whatsoever things and if you ask anything, you can't take those and make them blanket promises to just a multitude of people.

Those are special promises to a specialized group. So with a servant, he prayed and made this little arrangement with God. And it came to pass, verse 15, before he was through praying, that behold,

Rebecca came out who was born to Bethuel, the son of Milcah, the wife of Nahor, Abraham's brother, with her pitcher upon her shoulder.

Now, Milcah was the sister of Lot. Their father died early. When he died, Abraham took the boy and his brother took the girl.

But his brother married the girl. And so he actually married his niece. And she then bore Bethuel, who was the father of Rebecca and of Laban, who we find figuring into the story quite prominently as we get down the line.

And Jacob goes in his flight from his brother Esau and comes against his uncle Laban. But that's the family kind of tie in here. So, before he was even through with his prayer, Rebecca came out with a pitcher upon her shoulder and the damsel was very beautiful to look upon.

And she was a virgin. Neither had any man known her. And she went down to the well and filled her pitcher and came up.

And the servant ran to meet her and he said, let me, I pray thee, drink a little water of thy pitcher. He'd put out the thing and now here's this first chance to test it. And he made this arrangement with God.

And so now he's putting the question. Let me have a little drink of water. And he waits in anticipation to see, you know, here's a beautiful, oh my, wouldn't that be nice? You know, the first one along, she's pretty and oh, let me have a drink of water.

And watching now for the response. And she said, drink my Lord. And she hurried and let down her pitcher upon her hand and she gave him a drink.

And when she had done giving him a drink, she said, I will draw water for thy camels also until they are through drinking. And she hurried and emptied her pitcher into the trough and ran again to the well to draw water and drew for all his camels. And the man wondering at her held her peace.

But don't you know, his heart was pounding at this point. Man, Lord, that's fast. She's so beautiful.

As he watched her, he thought, oh, could this possibly be it? And he, he just was holding his peace. He, he was wanting to burst out, but he, he, he held back. And so the next question, as the camels were through drinking, he took a golden, it says earring, literally, it's a nose ring of a half shekel weight.

Now, a half shekel weight would be about a quarter of an ounce. A shekel was about a half an ounce. So about a quarter ounce, little nose ring and two bracelets for her hands of 10 shekels weight of gold, or about five ounces of gold.

And he said, whose daughter are you? Question number two. This is going to be the clincher. Who's your father? Whose daughter are you? I pray thee.

Let me see. Is there room in your father's house for us to dwell? And she said unto him, I am the daughter of Bethuel, the son of Milcah, which she bore to Nahor. And she said, moreover unto him, we have both straw and food enough and room to lodge in.

And the man bowed down his head and he worshipped the Lord. Man, hit it right off the bat. She's one of Abraham's relatives.

And, and, oh, you know, can it be? I'm sure that his heart was just really filled with excitement and anticipation and he worshipped the Lord. And he said, blessed be the Lord God of my master Abraham, who hath not left destitute my master of his mercy and truth. So blessing the Lord for his goodness to Abraham.

But then he said something that I think is very significant. I being in the way the Lord led me. I think that that is one of the most important verses in the scripture for those who are desiring to know how to be led of God.

I being in the way the Lord led me. I believe that God expects us to step out in faith. And as we step out in faith, he leads us.

I think that many times we make a mistake by just lying back and saying, now, Lord, lead my life. And I'm just going to lie here, Lord, until you lead me. Chances are you'll never be led.

Stand up. Start walking. And then the Lord will lead you where you should go.

Too many people take a very passive attitude towards the leading. Well, Lord, I'm available. Here I am.

You can just lead me, Lord, wherever. But you have a very passive attitude towards God leading your life. There is that necessity of stepping and I being in the way the Lord led me.

Now, had he stayed back in Beersheba and just prayed for months, Lord, now you lead me to the one. Lead me to the one, Lord. You lead me to the one.

How could the Lord have ever led him to Rebecca as long as he was in Beersheba? He had to get out. He had to go. When he went, then the Lord led him.

I being in the way the Lord led me. I think that one of the things that we often make a mistake as far as the leading of God is that we expect God to lay out the whole picture. Philip was in the midst of a great revival up in Samaria.

Many people were believing and turning to the Lord. And the Lord said, Philip, get down to the desert, to Gaza, the desert area there. Now, the Lord would say that to half of you.

You say, well, Lord, why do you want me to go down there? Are you sure, Lord, that that's where you want me to go? What do you want me to do, Lord? What's what do you got in mind for me down there? Lord, there's a neat revival going on here. A lot of people surely, Lord, what is it that you want? We want God to lay out the whole picture. But God doesn't always lay out the whole picture to us.

Many times he just gives us one step at a time. And you're not going to get step number two until you've taken step number one. Why should you? Why should God give you the second step if you haven't followed the first step? So Philip left Samaria, went down to Gaza.

When he got down to Gaza, he saw a chariot heading towards Ethiopia. And the Lord said, go up and join yourself to the chariot. Well, Lord, what do you want me to do that for? Why should I go join myself to the chariot? No, no questions.

Just he went and he ran up next to the chariot. You see, God leads us one step at a time. But I being in the way, the Lord led me.

If I don't take step number one, I'll never be directed to step number two. I've got to step out in faith at step number one. And as I get in the way, as I start moving, then God will lead my movements.

I being in the way, the Lord led me. I love that because that's just how God leads us. When we have stepped out in faith, following the directions of the Lord, then God will lead us in the next steps that we should take.

I being in the way, the Lord led me to the house of my master's brothers. Oh, how about that? Five hundred miles and hit right on the nose. The Lord has led me to the house of my master's brothers.

There were probably many wells that he could have stopped at, but God led him right to the right one. Many young girls coming out to draw water, but the timing was just perfect. Rebecca was the first one.

After 500 miles, success. And the damsel ran and she told them of her mother's house, these things. She ran home and said, oh, there's a man there with 10 camels.

And he gave me these golden bracelets and this nose ring and all, you know, and he's just, he got all these servants and all with him. And Rebecca had a brother and his name was Laban and Laban ran out unto the man and to the well. Now, as you will learn later in the story, not tonight.

Laban was a fairly greedy fellow. And the thing that really attracted him was his sister coming home with these golden bracelets. And so he's going to be a very gracious, charming fellow.

And he comes running out, you know, man, she made out with a couple of golden bracelets. Maybe I can get something out of this deal. He was always looking for what he could get out of a deal.

And so he comes out, you know, just charming, gracious host. And Laban ran out to the man at the well and it came to pass when he saw the earrings, you see, and the bracelets upon his sister's hands. And when he heard the words of Rebecca, his sister saying, this is what the man spoke to me, that he came unto the man and behold, he stood by the camels at the well.

So the servant had stayed there at the well in order that she might go home and see if it would be all right. You know, there's a man here with some servants and they got 10 camels and they want to know if there's room for them to spend the night. And so he said, come in, thou blessed of the Lord.

Why should you be standing out here? For I have prepared the house and room for the camels. He hadn't had time to do that yet, but believe me, I'll do it. You know, he saw the bracelets and the whole thing.

And the man came into the house and he unsaddled or ungirded the camels and he gave straw and the camels and water to wash his feet and the men's feet that were with him. And there was set meat before him to eat, but he said, I don't want to eat until I have told you my errand. And so they said, speak on, go ahead, tell us.

And he said, I am Abraham's servant and the Lord has blessed my master greatly and he has become great and he has given him flocks and herds and silver and gold and men's servants and maid servants and camels and donkeys. And Sarah, my master's wife, has born him a son when she was old and unto him hath he given all that he has. And now we begin to see the picture of the intercession of the Holy Spirit, as he seeks to draw out a bride for Jesus Christ.

And the Holy Spirit tells us the wealth of the heavenly kingdom, the glories of God's kingdom. And in the word, we read the glory of heaven, streets of gold, gates of pearl, walls of precious stones, beautiful river, trees on either side, crystal clear fountain of water, of living water, of life. And the Holy Spirit has revealed the glory of God's kingdom, the world, the universe.

And God has a son and God has given all things to the son. He is the heir of all things and God has put all things under him. And so the Holy Spirit testifies to us of the glory of the kingdom of God and how that he has made his son the heir of the whole thing.

And the son is looking for a bride. The father actually is looking for a bride for his son. So that when the Holy Spirit has finished his work in the testifying to us of Jesus Christ, it's like Peter said, whom having not seen ye love.

Holy Spirit's done a good job. Though I haven't seen him, I love him. And even though I don't see him yet, I haven't seen him yet, yet in my heart I'm rejoicing with a joy unspeakable and full of glory at the anticipation of that glorious kingdom of which I have become a part as the bride of Jesus Christ.

I can hardly wait. My heart is filled with longing and anticipation of that glorious day when I will see him face to face. Now I look through the glass darkly, then face to face, but joying now with this unspeakable joy as I just anticipate the glories of that eternal kingdom of God of which I am to share a part, the bride of Jesus Christ.

And so the servant begins to tell of the wealth of his master, all that he has, the servants, the camels and the gold and all and everything that he has, he has given unto his son. And my master made me swear saying that I would not take a wife for his son from the daughters of the Canaanites in whose land he dwells, but that I should go unto his father's house and to his family and to take there a wife for his son. And I said to my master, what if the woman will not follow me? And he said to me, the Lord before whom I walk will send his angel with thee and prosper thy way.

Abraham's faith and belief that God would prosper it and make it a successful journey. And you will take a wife for my son, from my family and of my father's house. Then thou shall be clear from this oath when you come to my family.

And if they will not give you one, thou shall be clear from my oath. And so I came this day unto the well and I said, oh Lord God of my master, Abraham, if now thou do prosper my way, which I go, behold, I am standing by the well of water and it shall come to pass that when a virgin comes forth to draw water and I say to her, give me, I pray thee a little water of thy pitcher to drink. And if she say to me, both drink you and I will also draw for your camels, let the same be the woman whom the Lord has appointed out for my master's son.

And before I was done speaking in mine heart, behold, Rebecca came with her pitcher. Now here to me is an interesting thing and that is that God hears the prayers of our heart. It isn't necessary that prayers be verbalized.

So often we think we haven't prayed if we haven't spoken out. But God knows the prayers of your heart. The servant wasn't out there with hands raised and saying, now Lord God of my father, Abraham.

You know, had he been doing that, then all of the girls around there thinking, ooh, look at all the loot and you know, they'd all be running to get water. I think that many times our loud prayers are answered just

because people are tired of hearing our cries and they say, you know, anything to shut them up, you know, and they'll respond to our needs because I've let them really be known before man. Jesus said, go in your closet, shut the door.

Your father that sees in secret will reward you openly. And prayer doesn't have to be uttered. Now, I find that it's good for me to verbalize.

I don't have to, but I find it's good for me if I do. Or if I kneel down next to the bed and put my head on the bed and just begin to pray to the Lord in my heart, it isn't long before I am resting in the Lord. So for me, it's good to verbalize because it keeps my mind on what I'm praying.

If I'm just praying in my heart, so often my heart will run off into something else. And I find my mind is wondering, I'm back in Hawaii again all of a sudden. And so my mind has a tendency to wonder when I'm just praying in my heart.

Now, I do a lot of praying just in my heart. There are some things that I just don't want to utter and they're just prayers of my heart. But then I do find it necessary to verbalize my prayers.

It keeps my mind on what I'm saying and on my prayer and on my conversation with God. But it isn't necessary that prayers be verbalized. God knows the cry of our heart.

And to me, it is very interesting that he was just praying in his heart as he was there. It's just, his head was bowed perhaps and not even necessarily. But in his heart, he was just thinking, oh Lord, now let it work out like this.

And it was just a prayer that was going on in his heart. When I was done speaking in my heart, behold, Rebecca came forth with her pitcher on her shoulder and she went down to the well and drew water. And I said to her, let me drink, I pray thee.

And she made haste and let down her pitcher from her shoulder and said, drink and I will give thy camels drink also. So I drank and she made the camels drink also. And I asked her and said, whose daughter art thou? And she said, the daughter of Bethuel, Nahor's son, whom Melchah bear unto him.

And I put the earring upon her face and the bracelets. Now, as I told you, it's a nose ring. That's why he put it on her face.

It'd be hard to put an earring on your face. And the bracelets upon her hands. And I bowed down my head and worship the Lord and bless the Lord God of my master Abraham, which had led me to the right way to take my master's brother's daughter unto his son.

And now, if you will deal kindly and truly with my master, tell me, and if not, tell me that I may turn to the right hand or to the left. Now I'm here and that's the issue. Now tell me, are you going to let her go or not? No, let me know.

Then Laban and Bethuel answered and said, the thing is proceeding from the Lord. We cannot speak to the bad or good. Behold, Rebecca is before thee.

In other words, what can we say? The thing is obviously from God. Behold, Rebecca is before thee. Take her and go and let her be thy master's son's wife, as the Lord hath spoken.

And it came to pass that when Abraham's servant heard their words, he worshiped the Lord, bowing himself to the earth. And the servant brought forth jewels of silver and jewels of gold and raiment and gave them to Rebecca. And he gave also to her brother and to her mother precious things.

And they did eat and drink, he and the men that were with him. And they tarried all night and they rose up in the morning. And he said, send me away unto my master.

Now notice as soon as the arrangement was made, then he came forth with gifts. As soon as Rebecca was committed, then he brought forth the gifts of gold and silver and beautiful raiment and all, began to just load her down with gifts. As soon as we have committed our lives to belong to Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit begins to give to us the glorious gifts of the Spirit.

Begins to just give unto us gifts of peace and joy, love, gifts of power. He begins to really work in a special way within us. So in the morning, he said, send me, I pray, back to my master.

But her brother and mother objected and they said, oh, wait a minute, that's so fast. Let the girl abide with us for a few days at the least, ten. After that she shall go.

And he said unto them, don't hinder me seeing the Lord has prospered my way. Send me away that I may go to my master. And they said, we will call the girl and inquire at her mouth.

And so they called Rebecca and they said unto her, will you go with this man? And she said, I will go. Now it became Rebecca's decision. He is wanting to go right away in order that he might hurry back with the good news that his journey has been prosperous and successful.

Her mother and brother naturally are objecting. They are willing to give her, but oh, they wanted to spend at least a few last days with her because they know that they'll probably never see her again. And the servant is insisting, no, I want to go now.

Well, let's ask her, will you go with the man? And the beautiful response, I will go. Even as we must by choice and we must exercise that choice to be a part of the family of God. So the exercise of Rebecca's own choice.

And they sent away Rebecca, their sister and her nurse. So evidently they were wealthy too, for she had her own private maid and Abraham's servant and his men. And they blessed Rebecca and said unto her, thou art our sister.

Be thou the mother of thousands of millions. Oh boy. They want her to be the mother of a billion people and let thy seed possess the gate of those which hate them.

And Rebecca arose and her damsels, plural, and they rode upon the camels and followed the man. And the servant took Rebecca and went his way. And Isaac came from the way of the well, Lahairoi.

Now you remember Lahairoi means uh, the well of him that lives and sees it was, uh, at this well that, uh, Hagar was weeping. Uh, she didn't see the well and, and Ishmael was dying from dehydration. She put him under a bush and went over a ways cause she didn't want to see him die.

And, and she was crying out to the Lord and Ishmael was under the bush, crying out to God and praying. And the Lord said, what ails you? And she said, ah, you know, I'm dying and I don't want to see my son die and all. The Lord said here, behold, there's a well of water.

And so she went over and got the water and gave him a drink and he was refreshed and revived. Well, she called the name of the well, the Lord sees me. So now Isaac is, is taken up residence near this particular well.

And this well comes into the story, uh, a couple more times as we find that it is the area where Isaac had moved. Isaac came from the way of the well, the high Roy, for he dwelt in the South country and Isaac went out to meditate in the field that even tide. And he lifted up his eyes and saw and behold, the camels were coming.

Now it is interesting that there is much spoken to us concerning the faith of Abraham. Very little is spoken to us concerning the faith of Isaac or concerning the relationship of Isaac to God that is directly. But here is a indication of the, of the spiritual kind of a depth that Isaac had meditating in the evening.

I have found that one of the greatest places to meditate is in the evening time. I love it about the time of twilight sun, just going down and it seems like it's just a neat time. If you're out in the desert or when I was just a little guy, we used to live near the beach.

And one of my favorite things is it was to just go down there and sit in the sand all by myself, watch the sunset. And, and the seagulls and the sandpipers and, and just to meditate upon God and the greatness of God. And, and it was just a, a childhood memory that really lingers.

It's just a beautiful experience, meditation at evening time. And so here is Isaac engaged in meditation at evening time. And he looked up and behold, he saw the camels coming.

All right. Now at this point, he doesn't know if he leaves there or if the servant has been successful or not. And Rebecca lifted up her eyes.

And when she saw Isaac, she lighted off the camel for she had said to her servant, who is this man walking in the field to meet us? And the servant said, it is my master. Therefore she took a veil and covered herself. And the servant told Isaac all of the things that he had done.

And Isaac brought her into his mother, Sarah's tent and took Rebecca and she became his wife and he loved her. And Isaac was comforted after his mother's death. Then in chapter 25, we find that Abraham, after Sarah's death, took another wife.

Her name was Keturah. The name means mother of us all. And she bare him Zimram, Jokshem, Medan, Median, Ishbak, Shua and Jokshem begat Sheba and Dedan.

The sons of Dedan were Esherim and Latushim and Leumim. And the sons of Median, Ephaph and Ephur and so forth. And the names mean nothing to us and probably never will.

As I told you so often, it'll follow a line just for a generation or two and drop them. That's the end of it. Because this line has nothing to do with Jesus Christ.

It'll follow it for a generation or so. Pop, that's it. Whatever happened to them, where they went, who they became, nobody knows.

It's just, they're not significant to the story. The story is about Jesus Christ. Back here in Genesis, the story is about Jesus Christ.

And we're going to come on down the line that's going to lead us to Jesus Christ. We're going to let the others go. We might follow them for a generation or two, but we're going to let them go.

They're not important. The whole story centers around the person of Jesus Christ. We say His story.

What is history? It is His story, the story of Jesus. That's what history is all about. And so that's what this record is all about.

It's all about Jesus. And it's only going to center in the one person, Jesus. It'll let the others go, go quickly.

We'll have a name or two thrown in, and then that's the end of it. We're going to let them go because we want to center in, we want to concentrate on the central person of history. So, follow out the rest of Abraham's children for just a ways.

And Abraham, this is the important one, verse five, gave all that he had unto Isaac. Isaac's the son of promise. All that he had went to Isaac, but unto the sons of the concubines, which Abraham had, Abraham gave gifts, gave gifts to them, but everything that he had went to Isaac.

And he sent them away from Isaac, his son, while he yet lived eastward to the east country. So, he gave gifts to them, sent them away. Isaac is the one in whom the story is going to center, because Isaac comes in the line that's going to bring us to Jesus Christ.

Now, these are the days of the years of Abraham's life, which he lived a hundred and seventy-five years. Then Abraham gave up the ghost or his spirit, literally, and died in a good old age, an old man full of years. And he was gathered to his people, a hundred and seventy-five years old, and Abraham died.

That is, he gave up his spirit. In reality, what happened is that his spirit moved out of this old tent, because this old tent just couldn't manage it anymore. It was worn out.

Once a tent is worn out and has no more value, doesn't keep out the rain or wind, rips, and it just constantly needs patching and repairing, it's time to move out of the tent. And so, Abraham moved out of his tent. Now, this was before Jesus Christ made access into heaven.

So, Abraham did not go into heaven, but he went into the grave, into Hades, where he became the master comforter of all of those who went into Hades waiting for the promise of God. So, in the 16th chapter of Luke, we find Abraham in Hades comforting Lazarus, and we find the rich man talking to Abraham, and Abraham responding to him. Now, when Jesus died, before he ascended into heaven, he first of all descended into the lower parts of the earth, and he preached to those souls that were in prison, the spirits, Abraham's spirit down there in prison.

Jesus preached to him and to all of those who with Abraham were waiting for the promise of God, the Messiah, to come. And so, the prophecy of Isaiah concerning Jesus Christ is that he would open the prison doors to those that were bound. That's the prison doors of death, where these people were bound.

And he opened the doors so that when he ascended, he led the captives from their captivity. So that now, as a child of God, when my spirit leaves this tent, because of the way that Jesus Christ has made for me, when my spirit leaves this tent, it's going into a new house that is not made with God, not made with hands, a building of God eternal in the heavens. I'm moving out of this old tent into a new house that the Lord said he had gone to prepare for me, for he said, I'm in my father's house, there are many mansions.

If it were not so, I would have told you, I'm going to prepare a place for you. He's preparing me a new body. It is a building of God.

It's not made with hands. It's eternal. This one is temporary.

It'll never see the number of years that Abraham's body saw. That would be the, that would be to me, the worst thing that could ever happen to me, it would be to live to 175. In fact, I don't want to even see the 75.

If God so wills it, fine, but I don't think I'll ever see it. Because as this tent wears out, the Lord's already prepared a new building for my spirit, a new house, not a tent anymore. I'm getting sort of tired of the tent.

The tent's getting sort of tired too. Tent's good for a while, but after a while you begin to realize that they're just not the conveniences in a tent that you'd like to have. You get longing to move into a house.

And one of these days I'm going to move into a brand new house. A building of God, not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. That's why Paul said, we who are in this body do often groan, earnestly desiring to move out.

Not that we would be unembodied spirits, but that we might be clothed upon with a body which is from heaven. For we know that as long as we're in this body, in this tent, we are absent from the Lord, but we would choose rather to be absent from this body and to be present with the Lord. One day, Abraham gave up the ghost, or his spirit left his body after dwelling in it for a hundred and seventy-five years.

Good old age, an old man, full, and he was gathered to his people. And his sons, Isaac and Ishmael, notice they are joined together now for, you know, there was that animosity that existed between them. But it seems that at least at their father's death, they were brought together.

And at their father's death, they joined together. Ishmael is still there. And they buried Abraham in that cave of Meppelah, the field of Ephron, the son of Zohar, the Hittite, which is there before Mamre, that field which Abraham purchased in that, you know, cultural thing that we got into last Sunday night.

Now, these are the generations of Ishmael. And so, we'll follow Ishmael for just, you know, a little ways, and then we're going to drop him because Ishmael isn't important to the story. And so, he gives us the names of Ishmael's descendants, and they are no more important to you as are the descendants of Abraham's concubines.

And so, I'm not going to wrestle with those names. You can wrestle with them if you want. Verse 16, it says, And these are the sons of Ishmael, and these are their names by their towns and their castles, twelve princes according to their nations.

And these are the years of the life of Ishmael. He lived to be a hundred and thirty-seven years. And he gave up the ghost and died and was gathered unto his people.

And they dwelt from Hevelah to Shur, and that is before Egypt, as you go towards Assyria. And he died in the presence of all of his brothers. And these are the generations of Isaac, Abraham's son.

Now, we come to the one that's important, the one we will follow. Abraham begat Isaac, and Isaac was forty years old when he took Rebekah to wife, the daughter of Bethuel, the Syrian of Paninarum, the sister of Laban, the Syrian. And Isaac entreated the Lord for his wife because she was barren.

Now, he married her, but yet she was unable to bear children. And so, Isaac prayed for her that God would heal and allow her to bear children. It is interesting how many children we have running around Calvary Chapel that are answers to prayer.

Couples that could not have children who came to the elders and were prayed for, and God blessed them. And now, we have so many little children running around here that are really just true answers to prayer. They're little miracle babies that God has given.

And it is scriptural that Isaac entreated the Lord for his wife. And the Lord was entreated of him, and Rebekah, his wife, conceived. And the children struggled together within her.

And she said, why am I thus? And she went to inquire of the Lord. Man, there was just all kinds of... She was pregnant. Man, it was more than just a baby kicking or moving.

This was a real fight going on in there. And this fight was to continue after they were born. How much consciousness does a child have in the womb? We really don't know because we can't remember.

How much consciousness did you have during the first year out of the womb? You really don't know. You can't remember. Now, that a child is conscious out of the womb, I have no doubt.

For out of the womb, during the first year, a child is capable of expressing feelings of contentment, happiness, anger, being upset. And yet, none of you can remember that first year of your life outside of the womb. The fact that you can't remember it doesn't mean that you didn't have feelings.

So, we have no proof at all that a child doesn't have emotions and feelings within the womb. Maybe some of those movements that you feel are those of anger. The little kid gets mad at the position, he kicks you, you know.

Tired of this position. We don't know what feelings they may have prenatally. Now, it is quite possible that these two little guys in the womb were angry with each other and were going at it.

They were struggling in her womb. And when they were born, as soon as they were born, the one little guy reached out and grabbed the other guy's heels, still struggling with him. Fight still going on.

And it really never did stop. So, she was concerned with all of this movement. And so, she prayed about it.

Lord, what's going on? And the Lord said unto her, two nations are in your womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from their birth, or from your bowels, and the one people shall be stronger than the other people, and the elder shall serve the younger. Now, this is before they were ever born, before they ever did anything. How is it that God could already make this prediction? Is there fairness with God? Is it fair for God to say, well, the elder's going to serve the younger before they were ever born? Paul takes this up in Romans.

The sovereignty of God in election. But we must always remember that God's election is always premised upon his foreknowledge. Whom he did foreknow, those he did also predestinate, that they should be conformed to the image of his Son.

So, God chose while the children were still fighting in the womb. Two nations are fighting. Nations that are going to be different from each other.

One is stronger. And so, the two nations, Israel and the Edomites, who never did really get along. Now, the Edomite nation has come to the end.

The last known Edomite was the family of Herod. Who was the king at the time of Jesus and still then, he destroyed all the Jewish boys trying to get rid of the Messiah. The Edomites remained antagonistic towards the purposes of God.

When the children of Israel were coming out of the land of Egypt and wanted to pass through their land in order that they might come to the land that God had promised, the Edomites came out to meet them, to fight them, to keep them from coming through. Again, seeking or showing themselves antagonistic to the purposes of God. This is the characteristic of the Edomites from the beginning.

Esau was that way. He really didn't care about God or the things of God. He was a very natural man.

He was the typical natural man. Interested in manly kind of things to be sure, but not interested in godly things. And God, knowing in advance his disposition and his despising of spiritual things in advance, chose the younger one to be the heir and the one through whom the Messiah would eventually come.

So, the younger one is chosen by God over the elder while still in the womb. And when her days to be delivered were fulfilled, behold, there were twins in her womb. The first one came out all red, all over like a hairy garment.

So, just a little kid covered with hair. And so, appropriately, they called his name Harry. That's what Esau means.

And that was very common in those days. You would name your child after a circumstance of his birth. After that came his brother out.

And he took, and his hand took hold on Esau's heel. And that was probably exciting. He said, oh look, he grabbed his brother's heel.

And someone said, well then call him heel catcher. And Jacob literally means heel catcher. That's the literal interpretation.

It came to mean surplanter. But the literal meaning is heel catcher. And Isaac was 60 years old when she bared them.

So, they went 20 years without any children. They were 40 when he was married, 60 before the children were born. So, they're 20 years.

And he prayed and God gave her children, gave her twins. And the boys grew. And Esau was a cunning hunter, a man of the field, an outdoorsman.

But Jacob was a plain man dwelling in tents. Now, I'm afraid that the translators have done Jacob a bad turn in translating this a plain man. The word that they translated was the Hebrew word tam.

They translated it plain. The word other places in the Old Testament has been translated perfect. You remember when God said to Satan concerning Job, have you considered my servant Job a perfect man? It's the same Hebrew word tam.

Concerning Job, it was translated perfect. And so, the translators have done Jacob sort of a bad turn calling him a plain man. The scripture is actually saying he was a perfect man or a complete man.

But he dwelt in tents. Now, we have a tendency to really put Jacob down. And I have to confess that I have done my share of putting this guy down because of some of the tricks that he pulled.

But in reality, he was the man that God had chosen. And the interesting thing is that God never put him down. And so, about the last time I put him down, the Lord spoke to me and said, hey, how come you keep putting him down? I said, oh man, look at those horrible things he did.

He said, hey, where did I put him down? And I looked and I couldn't find where God put Jacob down. So, I quit putting Jacob down. For Paul said, who are you to judge another man's servant? Before his own master, he either stands or falls.

And yes, God is able to make him to stand. And God made Jacob to stand. So, who am I to put him down? If Jacob were my servant, then I would have dealt with him, as I feel that maybe he should have been dealt with.

But he isn't my servant. He doesn't have to answer to me. He is God's servant.

Now, if that is true about Jacob, then it is true also about each other. Who am I to put you down when God is lifting you up? Who am I to judge you? You're not my servant. If you were my servant, then I could judge you.

You're not serving me. You're serving God. And thus, I have no right to judge your servants.

Oh, you're a rotten servant. Oh, I have no right to make that kind of a judgment concerning you. That's God's judgment.

That's for him to judge you because you're serving him. And it's for him to judge me because I seek to serve him. So, Jacob was not a plain man.

He was a tam man. Perfect, actually, or a complete man. And he dwelt in tents.

His brother outdoors, Jacob, loved the tent life. And Isaac loved Esau, but for base reasons, because he ate his barbecued venison. Now, that's no reason for loving one son above another.

It's because the guy's a good hunter and can bring in venison. You get hooked on venison. And so, he loved Esau because he ate the venison.

But Rebecca loved Jacob. So sad, but true. With the parents, there was a displaying of favoritism among the children.

And Jacob was fixing some pottage. And Esau came in from the field and he was faint. And Esau said to Jacob, feed me, I pray thee, with some of that red pottage, for I'm faint.

And therefore, his name was called from then on, Red. Edom means red. And his descendants were called the Edomites because he wanted this red pottage.

He was hungry and fainting. And Jacob said, sell me this day thy birthright. And Esau said, hey, I'm at the ready to die.

What profit is a birthright to me? He was very flippant about it. Hey, man, what about the birthright? I'm ready to die. I want your pottage.

But Jacob pressed the point. And Jacob said, swear to me then this day. And he swore unto him.

And thus, he sold his birthright to Jacob. Then Jacob gave Esau the bread and the pottage of lentils, which he did eat and drink. And they rose up and went and he rose up and went his way.

Thus, Esau despised his birthright. He didn't really care about the birthright at all. He wasn't interested in spiritual things.

He could care less about birthright. He hated it. He wasn't interested in it.

And thus, he despised his birthright. Now, there was a famine in the land beside the first famine that was in the days of Abraham. And like father, like son.

Isaac went to Abimelech, the king of the Philistines, and to Gerar. Now, it was to Abimelech that Abraham went, but certainly not the same one that Isaac went to, because this is a hundred years later, more than a hundred years later. So, Abimelech was sort of a title of the king of the Philistines.

And so, Isaac went unto the land of the Philistines and the Lord appeared unto him and said, don't go down to Egypt. Dwell in the land which I will tell thee of. Now, this is God's direct command.

Don't go down to Egypt. Dwell in the land I show you. Sojourn in this land and I will be with thee and will bless thee.

For unto thee and unto thy seed, I'm going to give these countries and I will perform the oath which I swear to Abraham thy father. And I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of heaven. And I will give unto thy seed all these countries and in thy seed shall all of the nations of the earth be blessed.

And so now God visits Isaac as he is going over to the land of the Philistines. God comes to him and visits and reiterates to Isaac the promise that he had made to Abraham. The land is going to be yours.

I'm going to multiply your seed. But then the heart of the thing is through thy seed shall all of the nations of the earth be blessed. Not plural, but singular referring to Jesus Christ.

So, the promise of the Messiah to come down through Isaac and thus reiterated the promise that he had made to Abraham. Now that same covenant and promise is passed on to Isaac at this particular time in his life. Because that Abraham obeyed my voice and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws.

So, really it is because of Abraham that the promises come and Isaac is the beneficiary even of his father's faithfulness. And Isaac dwelled at Gerar. Now the men of the place asked him about his wife and he said, like I said, father like son, she's my sister.

For he feared to say she is my wife lest he, the men of the place, would kill me for Rebecca because she was still beautiful to look upon. And it came to pass when he had been there a long time that Abimelech, the king of the Philistines, looked out of a window and he saw and behold Isaac was sporting with Rebecca, his wife, making love. And Abimelech called Isaac and said, behold of a surety she's your wife.

How is it that you said she is your sister? And Isaac said to him, because I said lest I die for her. And Abimelech said, what is this that you've done to us? One of the people might lightly have laid with your wife and you should have brought guiltiness upon us. And Abimelech charged all of his people saying, he that touches this man or his wife shall surely be put to death.

Then Isaac sowed in the land and received in the same year a hundredfold and the Lord blessed him. So the king put out a protective custody over him saying no one was to touch him or his wife. And Isaac went out and sowed and planted and God blessed it and he reaped a hundredfold from his planting.

And Isaac waxed great and he went forward and grew until he became very great for he had a possession of flocks and a possession of herds and a great store of servants. And the Philistines envied him for all of the wells, which his father's servants had digged in the days of Abraham. The Philistines said, stop them and fill them with earth.

Then Abimelech said unto Isaac, go from us for thou art much mightier than we. So the same thing that happened to Abraham, they saw the blessing and the work of God upon his life and they became fearful of Abraham. And now Abimelech is doing the same thing concerning Isaac.

Seeing the fact that God's hand is so much upon him and the greatness of his wealth and all, they became fearful and they asked him to leave. And so Isaac departed from there and he pitched his tent in the valley of Gerar and he dwelt there. And Isaac digged again the wells of water, which they had digged in the days of Abraham, his father, for the Philistines had stopped them after the death of Abraham.

And he called the names after the names, which his father had called him. And Isaac's servants digged in the valley and they found there an artesian well. And the herdmen of Gerar did strive with Isaac's herdmen saying the water is ours.

And so he called the name of the well strife because they strove with him and he digged another well and they strove for that also. And so he called it contention. And so he removed from there and he digged another well.

And for that one, they did not strive. And so he called it roominess for he said, the Lord has made room for all of us and we will be fruitful in the land. So he went up from there to Beersheba.

And the Lord appeared unto him in the same night and said, now again, God is appearing to him just like he appeared earlier. I, as he returned now though, I am the God of Abraham, thy father. Fear not for I am with thee and will bless thee and multiply thy seed for my servant Abraham's sake.

Fear not for I am with thee. The presence of God in our lives should be sufficient to dispel all fears. We only get frightened when we forget that God is with us.

If you get all filled with fear and just all shook and upset, it means one thing. You've forgotten that God is with you. Fear not God said for I am with thee.

How many times that God made that the basis of dispelling fear. Fear not for I am with thee. Be not dismayed for I am thy God.

I will help thee. I will strengthen thee. Yea, I will hold thee by the right hand of my righteousness.

The Lord is my helper. David cried, of whom shall I be afraid? Fear not. I am with thee.

And for Abraham's sake, I'm going to bless thee. And so Isaac built an altar there and called upon the name of the Lord and he pitched his tent there and there Isaac's servants dugged a well. And then Abimelech came to him from Gerar with Ahuza, one of his friends and Phicol, the chief captain of his army, which is the title of the army general.

And Isaac said unto them, hey, why have you come to me seeing you hate me and you kick me out? And they said, we have seen that the Lord is certainly with you. And we said, let us now make a treaty between us, a covenant with you that you will not hurt us for we didn't touch you and we have done nothing to you but good. And we have sent you away in peace and now you're blessed of the Lord.

And so he made them a feast and they did eat and drink and they rose up in the morning and swore one to another and Isaac sent them away and they departed from him in peace. And it came to pass the same day that Isaac's servants came and told him concerning the well which they had dug and they said, we have found water. And so he called it Sheba.

Therefore, the name of the city is Beersheba unto this day. And Esau was 40 years old when he took a wife, Judah, the daughter of Beri, the Hittite, and Bathshemeth, the daughter of Elon, the Hittite, which were a grief in the mind unto Isaac and Rebekah. So Esau, 40 years old now, and he married a couple of girls of the Canaanites from the Hittites tribe.

And these girls were just a heartache to Rebekah and to Isaac. Probably were so imbued with the customs of their own culture and all, and probably their own gods that they worshiped that it was just a heartbreak for Rebekah and Isaac. There wasn't really good fellowship with these daughters-in-law.

There was just too much diversity for them to be close and to have a close fellowship. And so they became sort of a burden and a heartache to Rebekah and Isaac. And that is why one of the reasons why they encouraged Jacob to go back and to get his bride from the family of Abraham back in the area of Haran again, because Isaac's brides, they were just a mess and brought no joy or all to... Esau's wives, rather, just brought no joy to Isaac or Rebekah.

We're going to leave off here and next Sunday night we'll start in chapter 27 and we'll just move as we are able through the book of Genesis. Some nights taking more, some nights taking less, but let's strike out for five next Sunday night. The 27th chapter is a fairly long chapter, and so we'll let it go until next Sunday evening where we'll pick up the study again.

Chapter 27 and we will go through, we'll read through chapter 32, study it, and then next Sunday night we'll see how far we can get as we move along in this story of the ancestry of Jesus Christ. Shall we stand?

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